



**Integrating and strengthening the European Research Area**

**ERA-NET**

**Coordination and Support Action**

**ASTRONET**

**Coordinating Strategic Planning for European Astronomy**

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**Dissemination Level**

PU	Public	
PP	Restricted to other programme participants (including the Commission Services)	<b>X</b>
RE	Restricted to a group specified by the consortium (including the Commission Services)	
CO	Confidential, only for members of the consortium (including the Commission Services)	

## Objectives of the Task

The overall objective of Task 5.5 was the implementation of joint calls. There was a strong interconnection with Task 5.4, since generally speaking a joint call can be seen as a specific common action. This implied a strong overlap of the activities of both tasks. The task also depended strongly on input from Tasks 4.4 and 4.5 which were expected to deliver expert committee reports on Astrophysical Software Laboratory (ASL), Virtual Observatory (VO), and Laboratory Astrophysics (LA).

## Process

At the end of ASTRONET-1 (9/2005-12/2010) the discussion on call themes had been postponed to ASTRONET-2. After the launch of ASTRONET-2 in 2011 the discussion on the implementation of a joint call was resumed.

From the beginning of ASTRONET-2 the issue of the joint call was permanently addressed. The following activities were undertaken to identify a call theme with a recognized European added value and to solicit the participation of ASTRONET partner agencies in a call:

- Preliminary ideas were considered at the first Executive Committee (ExeC) meeting of ASTRONET-2 in January 2011 (ExeC No. 1).
- In the following months 3 teleconferences took place involved mainly MINECO, NWO, STFC, and PT-DESY, with occasional participation of ESO and CAS:
  - 13 July 2011
  - 8 September 2011
  - 5 December 2011
 (see Deliverable D5.2, Annexes 1 to 3 for the agendas). As has been reported in D5.2 during these teleconferences alternative ways for a less formal common action (coordinated funding) were discussed.
- The Task 5.4 workshop on the identification of possible common actions hold in Hamburg in April 2012 was also used to consider opportunities for joint call and to promote the further procedure for a joint call (cf. Deliverable D5.3).
- Further extensive discussions took place at the following consortium meetings
  - ExeC and Board
    - September 2011: Board No. 1, ExeC No. 2
    - May 2012: Board No. 2, ExeC No. 3
    - November 2012: ExeC No. 4
    - May 2013: Board No. 3, ExeC No. 5
    - November 2013: ExeC No. 6
    - March 2014: Board No. 4, ExeC No. 7
    - December 2014: ExeC No. 9
- On the occasion of ExeC meeting No. 6 in Prague the WP5 working group and representatives from the expert committees of the ASL and VO met on 25 of November 2013. The experts presented the respective committee activities and results in the two

areas. Opportunities for future joint calls were discussed in view of these (partly preliminary) results. The discussion was resumed the following day at the ExeC meeting.

- As all previous activities did not result in the identification of a call theme with a broad support by the agencies implying their participation in a joint call a dedicated workshop on the selection of a theme for a joint call with participants from 9 partner agencies was held in Hamburg in June 2014 (see Deliverable D5.8 for the agenda).

Three themes and the schedule for a joint call were proposed (see D5.8). In the following months involvement of the agencies in the joint call on the proposed themes was solicited, however without positive result.

## Final status

All activities listed above did not result in the implementation of a joint call.

This unsatisfactory situation in view of the Description of Work was extensively discussed at the ExeC meeting No. 9 in December 2014. There was a broad consensus among the agencies that a joint call presently would obviously not create an added value and an additional significant gain in the coordination of funding beyond what has been currently implemented in European project funding.

To give an indication of the existing high level of transnational cooperation in the context of large European infrastructures we show in Tab. 1 below in the form of a matrix “project vs. participating country” a selection of major ground-based instrumentation projects. Note that this selection is not meant to be complete but rather to illustrate the high degree of funding coordination already implemented even without dedicated joint calls. It includes instruments for telescopes at ESO and on the Canary Islands; also included is LOFAR and the e-infrastructure VO. As example for cooperation in the field of space science we list additionally Gaia DPAC.

With regard to budget, considering just the optical/IR instruments listed one talks about a total required funding of order of some 300 to 400 M€, far beyond any feasible joint call budget.

For comparison, the budget of the first ASTRONET joint call of 2008 on "Common tools for future large sub-millimeter facilities" amounted to some 3.2 M€, i. e. about of 1% of that amount. Despite the small budget the first call offered a strong added value for the emerging target facilities of the call, ALMA and Herschel, which was a fortunate, but rather unique constellation at that time. Especially for ALMA the development of data reduction and analysis methods gave a starting boost to some support work which was later on continued in the framework of the ALMA Regional Centre nodes.

The positive aspect of the above mentioned joint coordinated activities is that the current European astronomy infrastructure-related project funding is well coordinated. So presently there is no immediate strong need or added value for additional coordinating activities in context of a ASTRONET joint call in this area.

In conclusion, the decision of the Executive Committee at the ExeC meeting No. 9 was to put the efforts for the implementation of a joint call on hold for the time being.

Project	Country/Int. Org.																							
	FR	DE	ESO	IT	UK	ES	NL	CZ	ESA	SE	CH	PT	AT	BE	UA	HU	FI	DK	EE	GR	IL	SI	PL	
MUSE - VLT	X	X	X				X				X													
CRIRES - VLT		X	X	X						X														
SPHERE - VLT	X	X	X	X				X			X													
ESPRESSO - VLT			X	X		X						X	X											
ERIS - VLT		X	X	X							X													
MOONS -VLT	X	X	X	X	X		X				X	X												
GRAVITY - VLTI	X	X	X									X												
MATISSE - VLTI	X	X	X				X							X										
4MOST - VISTA	X	X	X		X		X			X														
MICADO - E-ELT	X	X	X	X			X							X										
MAORY - E-ELT	X		X	X	X																			
HARMONI+LTAO - E-ELT	X		X		X	X																		
METIS - E-ELT	X	X	X		X		X				X		X	X										
HIRES - E-ELT	X	X	X	X	X	X				X	X	X												
MOS - E-ELT	X	X	X		X	X	X			X														
WEAVE - WHT	X				X	X	X																	
GREGOR		X				X		X																
LOFAR	X	X		X	X		X			X														X
VO	X	X		X		X			X						X	X								
Gaia-DPAC	X	X		X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X

*Tab. 1 Coordinated European funding activities: multinational instrumentation projects with relevance for project funding involving at least 3 European participating countries (ministries, agencies, national institutions, including associated countries) or international organisations. Non-European partner countries are not listed.*